

in the report, the advisability of implementing such aspects of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, as he deems appropriate".

(D) "The President shall submit a second report to the Congress, not later than September 15, 2007, following the same procedures and criteria, outlined above".

(E) "Prior to the submission of the President's second report on September 15, 2007, and at a time to be agreed upon by the leadership of the Congress and the Administration, the United States Ambassador to Iraq and the Commander, Multi-National Forces Iraq will be made available to testify in open and closed sessions before the relevant committees of the Congress".

(F) The Department of Defense "will commission an independent, private-sector entity, which operates as a 501(c)(3), with recognized credentials and expertise in military affairs, to prepare an independent report assessing the following:

(i) The readiness of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) to assume responsibility for maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq, denying international terrorists a safe haven, and bringing greater security to Iraq's 18 provinces in the next 12-18 months, and bringing an end to sectarian violence to achieve national reconciliation;

(ii) The training, equipping, command, control and intelligence capabilities, and logistics capacity of the ISF;

(iii) The likelihood that, given the ISF's record of preparedness to date, following years of training and equipping by U.S. forces, the continued support of U.S. troops will contribute to the readiness of the ISF to fulfill the missions outlined in subparagraph (A)".

(iv) It is anticipated that the "Independent Report on the Iraqi Security Forces," will, in whole or in part, be available before September 5, 2007.

(2) Two successive reports by the President, a report from the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, a report from the Commander of Multi-national Forces—Iraq, and the Independent Assessment of the Iraqi Security Forces, thereby provide a comprehensive body of information available to the American public and to the Congress, upon which they can establish opinions and evaluate decisions on the future course of U.S. involvement in Iraq and the surrounding region.

(3) The findings that supported H.J. Res. 114, Public Law 107-243, which was enacted in 2002 and which authorized the President to use the Armed Forces of the United States against Iraq, require review and revision. Therefore, as part of his September 15, 2007, report, Congress expects that the President will submit to Congress a proposal to revise Public Law 107-243.

#### SEC. 1544. STATUS OF FORCES AGREEMENT.

The President shall direct the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense, to initiate negotiations with the Government of Iraq on a Status of Forces Agreement with a goal to complete work not later than 120 days after enactment of this Act.

#### SEC. 1545. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS IN IRAQ AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

##### (a) Findings

(1) The Iraq Study Group recommended a diplomatic offensive, stating "all key issues in the Middle East – the Arab-Israeli conflict, Iraq, Iran, the need for political and economic reforms, and extremism and terrorism, are inextricably linked". The report stressed that diplomacy aimed at solving key regional issues would "help marginalize extremists and terrorists, promote U.S. values and interests, and improve America's global image".

(2) Members of the Gulf Cooperation Council-Plus-Two issued a joint statement on January 16, 2007, reflecting "their collective desire to prevent Iraq from becoming a battleground for regional international powers and urged all to help end sectarian violence in Iraq".

(3) The Bush Administration supported and participated in the March 10, 2007, regional conference in Baghdad and the follow-up regional conference held in Egypt on May 3 and 4, 2007, and that conference produced three working groups: one chaired by Syria on Border Security, a second chaired by Jordan on Refugees, and a third by Turkey on Fuels and Energy.

(4) The redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq to other locations in the Middle East, would require the cooperation of regional governments.

(5) A revision of U.S. military policy in Iraq could increase the chances of stimulating greater economic and diplomatic assistance for Iraq from multi-lateral organizations and European allies, who have sought to limit their association with an unpopular war.

(6) Regional players, including—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, the Gulf States, and others have substantial concerns about Iran's disruptive agenda in the region that converge with U.S. interests.

(7) All states in the region, including Iran and Syria have some interest in preventing political turmoil and refugee flows from emanating from Iraq or the break-up of Iraq into sectarian regions.

(8) All nations that depend on oil imports, particularly those who are dependent on Persian Gulf oil, have a strong economic and security interest in maintaining stability in the Gulf region.

(b) It is the Sense of Congress that the United States Government should work vigorously with like-minded governments, including the Iraqi government, to establish a predictable and regular multi-lateral diplomatic forum related to Iraq that meets frequently and is open to all parties in the Middle East.

(c) Such a forum could be based on the existing structure of the May 2007 foreign ministers conference at Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt that plans to reconvene in Istanbul at a date to be determined, or it could be initiated with a new structure.

(d) U.S. goals in advancing the forum should include promoting international support for reconciliation in Iraq, dealing with refugee flows emanating from Iraq, protecting the territorial integrity of Iraq, advancing Iraqi economic development, and containing any conflict that might spread from Iraq.

(e) The United States should work with other nations at the forum to promote transparency of national interests and actions so that the risks for neighboring states of pursuing armed aggression or destructive sectarian agendas are heightened and all parties avoid miscalculations that could lead to conflict.

(f) In the context of a drawdown of American forces in Iraq, the United States should attempt to secure contributions of resources or military personnel for international efforts to stabilize Iraq's borders.

(g) Although focused on a multi-lateral approach to issues related to Iraq, the United States should encourage opportunities to discuss other regional concerns and to facilitate bilateral contacts between those in attendance, when appropriate.

(h) As the United States attempts to establish a more sustainable policy in Iraq, our government should launch a broader diplomatic offensive in the region aimed at repairing alliances, assuring regional govern-

ments of our staying power in the Middle East, enlisting greater help international help in combating terrorism, stabilizing oil prices, and making progress in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

**SA 2209.** Mr. CONRAD (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. GREGG, and Mr. ROBERTS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title I, add the following:

#### SEC. 143. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE REPLACEMENT OF THE TANKER AIRCRAFT FLEET.

It is the sense of Congress that timely replacement of the Air Force aerial refueling tanker fleet is a vital national security priority for the reasons as follows:

(1) The average age of the aircraft in the Air Force aerial refueling tanker fleet is now more than 43 years, with the age of the aircraft in the KC-135 tanker fleet averaging 46 years.

(2) The development and fielding of a replacement tanker aircraft will allow the United States military to continue to project combat capability anywhere in the world on short notice without relying on intermediate bases for refueling.

(3) Under current plans, it will take more than 30 years to replace the current fleet of KC-135 tanker aircraft, meaning that some KC-135 tanker aircraft are scheduled to remain operational until they are nearly 80 years old.

#### PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Mark Sullivan and Asmita on Senator HARKIN's staff be granted floor privileges during today's debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NATIONAL SUMMER LEARNING DAY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 268, and that the Senate then proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 268) designating July 12, 2007, as "National Summer Learning Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, en bloc, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.